

2015 transportation projects in review

The 2015 construction season was another busy one for ODOT crews and contractors as they worked on over \$50 million worth of transportation improvement and preservation projects here on the eastern side of the state. These projects keep highways safe and efficient for all users, promote tourism and provide good paying jobs to hundreds of contractors, many of whom live in the area. Dollars provided for transportation projects also get cycled back into local economies when contractors purchase material, supplies, food, lodging, local labor support and other services.

Community investment

“Keeping eastern Oregon’s highways in good condition benefits everyone,” said ODOT Area Manager Craig Sipp. “It provides safe roads for local users, keeps commerce moving and helps attract travelers from across the country and around the world. Vacationers spend millions of dollars in Oregon each year while enjoying our unique small communities, beautiful mountains, rivers, lakes, trails and parklands.”

This was demonstrated in September when Cycle Oregon once again made the dry side of the state their premier destination for 2,200 cyclists who came from many parts of the globe. During the week-long ride they ventured along highways and rural roads in Union, Baker and Malheur counties. While their planned trip to ride the Hells Canyon Scenic Byway was cut short due to a wildfire near Halfway, the group spent a great time and a fair amount of money, boosting local economies at the tail end of the summer season.

2015 Project Highlights:

Listed below are some of the key 2015 construction projects that preserved the existing system, repaired or replaced bridges and culverts, improved operation and safety features such as traffic signals and signs, or added new highway lanes, intersections, sidewalks and other components to the transportation infrastructure.

Pavement preservation

Pavement preservation work that includes resurfacing the roadways with new asphalt, concrete or a chip seal application covered nearly 350 lane miles of highway this year. Chip seals were applied to over 180 lane miles along OR 82, OR 203, OR 7, OR 207, OR 19 and other routes. These operations lay down a thin layer of rock chips in emulsified oil and are a good, cost effective way to extend the useful life of existing pavements.

Another 115 lane miles of highway surfaces received longer lasting pavement overlays or inlays that added or replaced several inches of new asphalt to create a smooth ride for motorists. These included sections of I-84 west of La Grande and south of Baker City; U.S. 20 west of Harper; U.S. 20/26 east of Vale; U.S. 395 south of Ukiah; OR 334 west of Athena and other routes.

Sections of I-84 also received concrete surface upgrades that included 16 lane miles in the westbound and eastbound truck lanes west of La Grande. The three-year I-84 Kamela to Second Street project replaced old asphalt along an eight-mile stretch of freeway this year, with a similar amount



Ladd creek culvert concrete pour.

constructed in 2014. The one-foot-thick layer of rock hard pavement is expected to last for decades under the area’s harsh winter conditions and heavy truck traffic.

In addition, nearly 10 miles of old concrete pavement between Huntington and Farewell Bend received much needed repairs to remove ruts and other signs of aging.



Ladd Creek culvert prior to construction of freeway undercrossing.

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